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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
The College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
School for American Crafts
In Candidacy for the Degree of
MASTER OF FINE ARTS in (Metals and Jewelry Design)

CO-EXIST

by

Samyuktha Valluru

11.07.2018

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ABSTRACT

My thesis is a visual narrative expression of co-existence in relationships. As I look deep inwards, I think about what has shaped the person I am today. I realize that if it were not for my learning to adapt and co-exist and the people I have met in my life, I would not be able to appreciate my personal evolution. Whether with self, family, society or the universe - behaviors like maintaining balance, flexibility, self-introspection, respect and transformation are all some fundamental stepping stones to co-existence.

For my thesis, I have crafted wearable jewelry, interactive small-scale objects and kinetic body sculptures that symbolize supporting aspects of co-existence. I have also used the physical body parts to be a sign of co-existence in my design compositions, as it offers a beautiful coordination between our thoughts and actions.

Synchronization of diversities being the core concept of my thesis, I hunted for materials to translate this idea. I found that paper and plastic sheets have a similar way of molding, but are also different in how they resist change. In the same way, metal and glass are also similar in how they flow in the molten state, but once solidified, they change. These contradictions in material behaviors are some elements that I have used as an additional metaphor to my theory. Applying design elements such as repetition, rhythm, contrast and balance, I designed a collection that speaks of various phases in togetherness. I used a classic combination of black, grey and half white with transparent, matte and metallic finishes as contrasts, since the look they build together is an apt vibe that can suit my idea of unity in diversity.

My thesis therefore is a visual evidence of co-existence in every sense of concept, material, color and composition as it highlights the bigger union of togetherness.

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INTRODUCTION

Spanning a legacy of 5,000 years, jewelry of India is a striking expression of the country's aesthetic and cultural history. The historic significance of Indian jewelry was a representation of social status more than anything else. The traditional symbols of various kingdoms are intricately detailed in gold, semi-precious stones and diamonds to depict both architectural and religious influences. However, the history of Indian jewelry has always remained traditional in its style of representation. Being a fine arts student specializing in metals and jewelry in the modern context, I wanted to take this opportunity to rethink and explore ways of presenting some of our cultural systems. Having finished my undergraduate studies in Industrial Design, influences from design movements such as minimalism and modernism played a role in the concept building process of my work. The furniture designer (*Charles Eames*) once said:

“Design is an expression of the purpose, and it may (if it is good enough) later be judged as art; design depends largely on constraints and it is a method of action (there are always constraints and these usually include ethic).”

This theory made me search for answers on what more can jewelry mean? Can I transition from the common belief that jewelry is not just about showcasing beauty and wealth but also an object that has a potential function of creating an experience to the body? Could there be any specific reason of its existence on a certain part of our body? Is it possible to make the wearer develop a bond with an object's presence on their body? These are some of the questions I want to explore as I dive into my thesis.

CONTEXT

Personal Background

What made me, me?

Having grown up in tightly knit bonds of friends and family, my most personal morals and values are inherently a part of my close people and the environment I was raised in. I firmly believe that our mental health and personal well-being are dependent on the quality of our personal relationships. The closer we are to the people we love, the happier we feel and the more personal satisfaction we have in our lives. Nonetheless, creating and maintaining happy personal relationships is not straightforward or simple. It takes a conscious effort and appreciation and gratitude for the relationship to thrive. A lot of behavioral aspects that form co-existence play a major role in human relationships. However, it is not very often that I see myself being appreciative of the relations that I am blessed with. Despite their support and encouragement, I am always lost in my own world of dreams.

I aim to use my thesis to represent important aspects of relationships that not just I but many other people miss out on looking into.

Discussion of research and evolution

I have a strong personal association to our socio-cultural roots of jewelry, and so I started looking into the significance and benefits of adornment in Hindu culture. It is only in Hindu culture where there is a tradition of wearing ornaments all over the body - the head, hair,

ears, nose, neck, arms, hands, fingers, waist and feet. As per Hindu Janajagruti Samiti, Vol 8, (Achardharma)

“These ornaments are not merely objects for display or deriving pleasure, but are an important medium to provide the woman with Chaitanya (Divine Consciousness) and activate divinity within her. In Hindu dharma, ‘adorning with ornaments’ is a principle Achar (Conduct). Ornaments are Raja-predominant and bestow Tej (Radiance). Without the ornaments, there is no Tej-imparting manifestation. Without manifestation, there is no activity. Without activity, there is no Prakruti (Primeval Nature). Without the Prakruti, there is no Maya (The Great Illusion). To bestow the world that has taken the form of Maya with Chaitanya (Divine Consciousness), ornaments are necessary”.

This philosophy in our culture inspired me to create objects that would treat human body as a divine space to manifest consciousness. I could see the potential of my work play a mediating role in mind-body coordination, and so I started learning how to empower the awareness and sensitivity in the wearer. My readings about the body’s automatic defense mechanisms from a research article “*Neurophysiology of postural movements*” by (Roberts,1967) showed me an evidence that:

“Postural state of a living body, at any moment, is the resultant state of all the mechanical forces acting upon it and its reactions to them include those produced by voluntary and involuntary movements”.

Using this, I started to design the form and function of my work to explore body parts in different reactive postures. I made prototypes and placed the wearer in a controlled situation where they could interact with the work, but with limitations appropriate to the design.

As a result, I was able to envision behaviors like balance, flexibility and transformation come to life. These observations helped me gain confidence with every piece designed.

On a technical note, to be able to execute the forms and ideas into physical reality, I wanted to use materials with different behaviors. My undergraduate studies in Industrial Design has given me experience with basic materials like wood, paper, plastic, thermocol, steel, plaster of paris and various types of fabric, but the lustrous appeal of metal always fascinates me. However, it wasn't an easy material to start working with. I started practicing basic techniques of riveting, forging, soldering, wire and sheet forming, reticulation, sweat soldering, hollow forming, hinge making and locking mechanisms to understand metal behavior in different scales and applications. Books like *Jewelry: Concepts and Technology* by Oppi Untracht provided me a visual reference for techniques.

Paper as a material surprises me every time I work with it due to how easily its physical dynamics change whenever it is folded or bent or weaved. Soon, my curiosity about using paper with metal grew. The playful and flexible nature of paper urged me into making forms the wearer can interact with. After countless YouTube tutorials, I made some prototypes using a specific four strip weaving technique. Since the creative process of building is more important to me as a maker, I could relate the technique of weaving four different strips coming from four directions to be a metaphoric expression of co-existence in relationships. Using simple geometric shapes like cubes, squares and circles, I discovered the joineries of these weaved forms with metal frames, using a minimalistic approach to detailing. In this process, I used metals like brass and copper to achieve a certain strength and contrast in the structures I crafted. Glass used in flame-working techniques offers a delicate behavior and as I work with it, I observe the layers of sensitivity and consciousness it evokes inwards. In my pieces, I attempt to catch this material

aspect, as I observe its presence in my work bringing the wearer's attention to the entire experience.

As an artist, designer and a maker, throughout my research into cultural, psychological, technical and material aspects from online articles, videos and experiences with the wearers, I have cultivated a body of inspiration and knowledge sufficient enough to nourish my thesis implementation.

Influences

In history, jewelry is limited by hierarchical values, like being worn only as a status symbol and luxury. However, the most notable period of expression and creative exploration, known as the New Jewelry Movement, took place in Europe during the 1960s and 1970s. (*Turner, 1976*). Jewelers began to reject the elitist expressions of the past and chose to define a new concern that supported the inexpensive material and spoke of a much deeper conceptual ideology. The quest for materials and meaning departed radically from the conventional ornamentation and its monetary significance which informed the pedagogy of jewelry-making.

In the same timeline, the work of Gijs Bakker redefined jewelry in all it means. In 'Shadow Jewelry' (*Bakker, 1976*), he designed the so-called "Organic" pieces, which marked on the advanced dematerialization of jewelry. This minimalistic approach to form and material attracted me to design my work using it.

With photographic aid, he showed the impression of a gold-wire which had been tightly bound around an arm, leg or waist for a short period. He tried to transfer the accent from the jewel itself

to the body. These pieces are literally ‘molded to the body’: jewelry which, through a minor modification, brings about a startling transformation in the body itself. This thought process inspired me to see a deeper relationship between jewelry and human body, where the body holds a stronger element of communication rather than the jewelry by itself as an object.

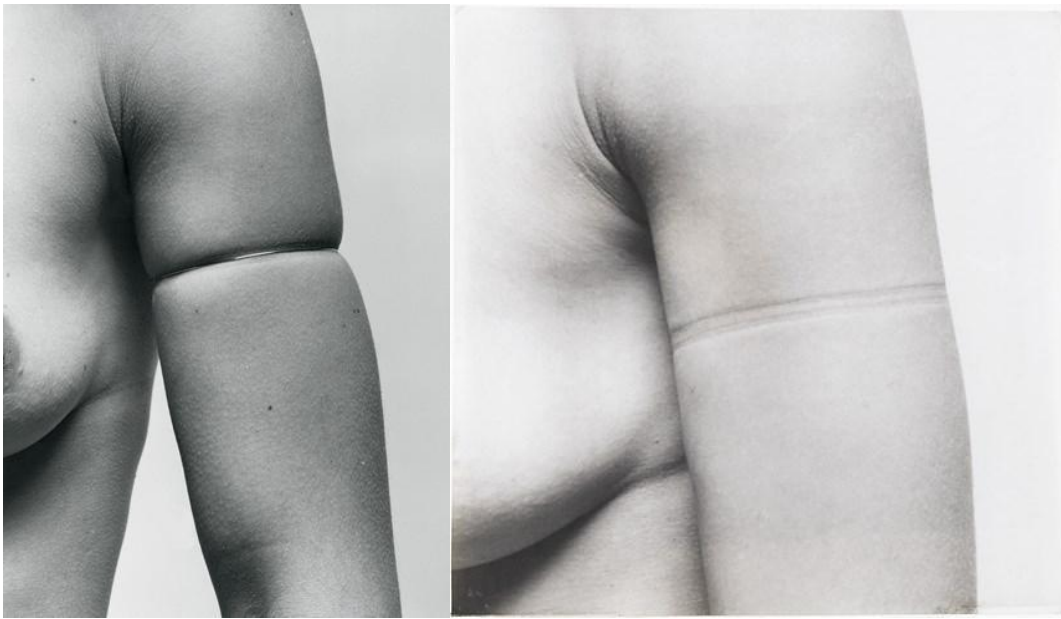


Fig.1: Gijs Bakker, Shadow jewelry, 1976

Gerd Rothmann is another artist I always deeply admire, as I like how he involves the human body in his work. In Figure 2, the artist uses his hand as a physical signature in the Zeigefinger bracelet (*Rothmann, 1992*). The body for which the object is destined will be wearing a work of art which is not just the result of personal research, but also a bodily mark and physical evidence of a relationship.

Using a contemporary language of expression, he revived the ancient functions of ornaments, the sentiments, intimacy and a personal dimension of the most heartfelt affections. These ideologies have influenced me to imagine newer ways of creating a deeper relationship between object and the body.



Fig.2: Gerd Rothmann, Bracelet Zeigefinger, 1992

Another artist who motivates my work is a Dutch fashion designer Iris Van Herpen. Her multidisciplinary approach to creation goes beyond fashion, and is a huge inspiration to me. Movement being the key element in her work, I've been possessed by the strong visual images she creates on the body. In one of her collections 'Between the lines' (Van Herpen, 2017)

"Van Herpen focuses on the gaps in between the structures of her materials, rather than the structures themselves, by shaping patterns that dissimulate the body's perspective or subtract it. By building up the patterns and then distorting them, the eye's perspective is tricked and challenged to see new patterns occurring in between".

This intentional eye play attracts me to visualize optically illusionistic forms as they have a potential to intrigue the viewer's thoughts. The fact that they can make a person question the visuals through these patterns is something that I wanted to implement through my designs.



Fig.3: Iris Van Herpen, between the lines, 2017

BODY OF WORK

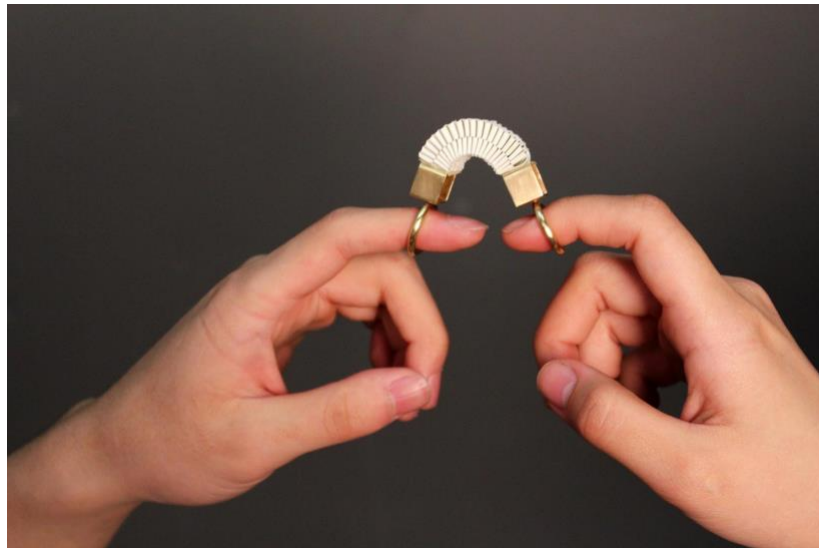
Anubhavana: Part 1

For the initial piece, I started with simple shapes like squares and cubes as I want the audience to connect to one uniform character throughout my collection. The term 'Anubhavana' is a Sanskrit word meaning 'Act of indicating feelings by sign or gesture'. Relationships being my core concept, I designed my first wearable sculpture to be the common element of connectivity between two people. This is to make my work be a visual platform of communication, where two ends can come together through my piece; to observe how people in various kinds of relationships will behave when put in contact and interaction with each other. By keeping both the wearers in a controlled environment, I had them communicate only with their fingers and hands with no verbal speech. I wanted to see how my work can help bring out some unexpressed feelings the wearers had. After the wearers developed some comfort between themselves, I could direct the wearers to depict few symbols that I had in mind.

As a result, I could interpret a lot of subtle aspects such as balance, flexibility and adjustment from their interactions as it takes a certain coordination from both the ends to show my thoughts symbolically. While some wearers adapted to work together in the same plane of thought, I noted that even everyday relationships function in the same way, where every situation is to be dealt with understanding and sensitivity.

I used regular sketchbook paper as a primary medium of connection in this piece as its simple flexible behavior give the required freedom to the wearers. While the weaving technique used for it is done by weaving four paper strips coming from four directions, I see even the process of creating it to be a metaphoric expression of co-existence.

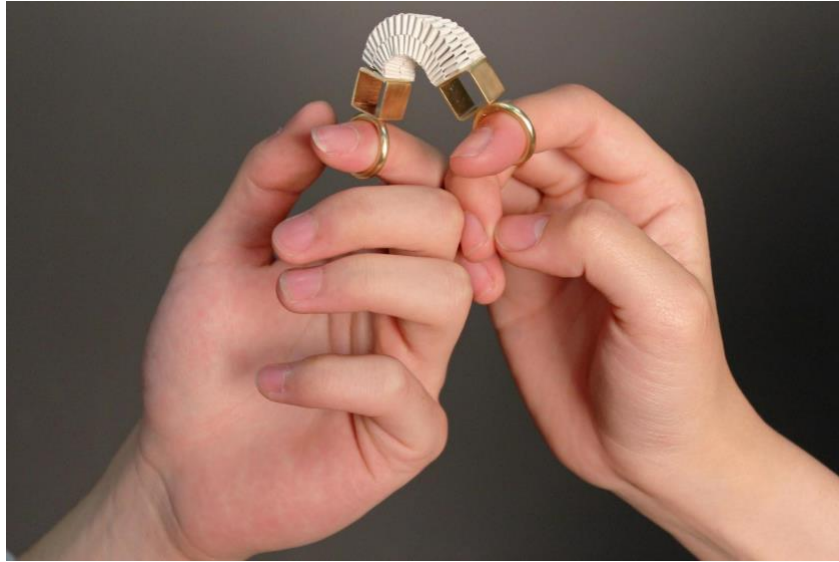
The metal cubes are hollow formed in 18g brass sheet and the ring shank is soldered in 16g brass wire. As I used the metal cubes to be an abstract depiction of two different individuals, I connected them by gluing the paper weaved form which is the bridging relationship I'm attempting to build.



Samyuktha Valluru 1; Anubhavana (Part1), Brass, sketchbook paper



Samyuktha Valluru 2; Anubhavana (Part1), Brass, sketchbook paper



Samyuktha Valluru 3; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper



Samyuktha Valluru 4; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper

After my experience of seeing the wearers interact with this design, I realized that this paper weaving form has a lot of potential to be a mediating ground for my wearers. As I progressed, I wanted to explore more possibilities of its presence in my designs.

Anubhavana: Part 2

In reaction to the first piece I created using fingers as a form of expression, I wanted to see how the same idea can translate for palms. I used the same principle of material and concept, with few variations in scale, color and technical details. Influenced by the philosophy of dematerialization from artists like Gijs Bakker, I designed the form to be as minimalistic as it can be, because the purpose of every detail in my design is purely functional and not ornamental.



Samyuktha Valluru 5; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic



Samyuktha Valluru 6; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

While palms allow the depiction of newer aspects like support and growth as well, I understood that the change in scale and placement of jewelry on a different body part can also create a shift in the dynamics within wearers.

After exploring the piece by wearing it in my own hands, I wanted to demonstrate how two ends can bring a world of expansion together. I directed the wearers to pose with my jewelry as seen in the images 7, 8, and 9. The form is fabricated by soldering a 16g brass wire frame with an 18g square shaped copper sheet in the center, so that the surface of the copper sheet can be glued as a support to the paper weaved form. Following the same paper weaving technique, I used paper with plastic in this piece as I wanted to try a contrast through a combination of materials as well. By using the spray painted glossy black plastic sheet for weaving the form, I wanted to see how flexible the movability can be. As I expected, the kinetics changed to a stiffer side as plastic is a material more resistant to folds and bends. It was an interesting observation, because I could interpret the weaving of contrasting behaviors to my thesis concept of coexistence.

With an intentional choice to follow a uniform color for the whole piece, I used liver of Sulphur patina for the copper sheet, as it results in a dark grey shade that is similar to the paper color used. These combinations slowly opened me to a new realm of material possibilities, as the use of plastic with paper expanded my options to try out new textures, colors and finishes. The color palette and material incorporation for my collection slowly started to set in from here, as the techniques and finishes I explored for metals, paper and plastic became a potential choice for the whole look in perspective.



Samyuktha Valluru 7; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic.



Samyuktha Valluru 8; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic.

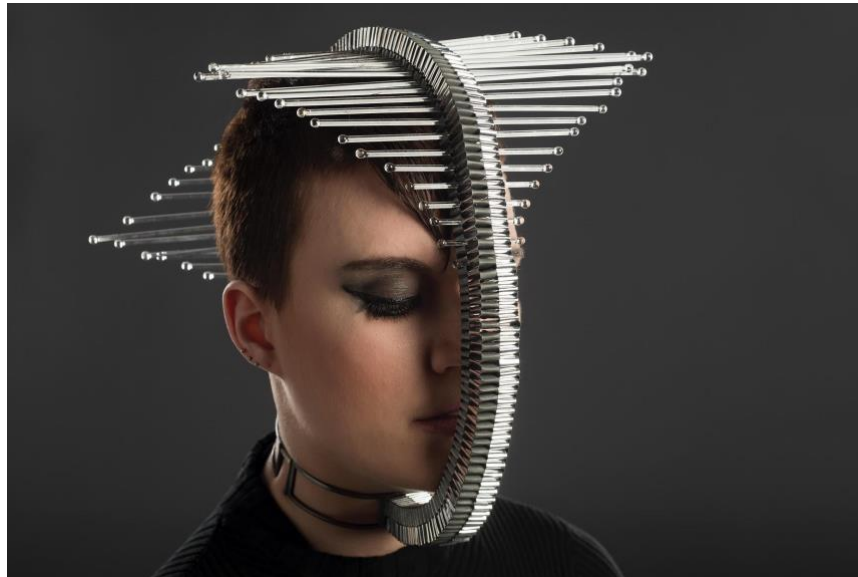


Samyuktha Valluru 9; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic.

Duality Within

Based on the learnings from my first two pieces, I designed my third sculpture titled 'Duality Within'. Through this piece, I talk about the relationship with our own self, as self-introspection helped me realize some of my strengths as well as weaknesses. Though it's a never-ending process of self-analysis for any person, I realized that being aware of them at the least can become the starting point to balance all sides.

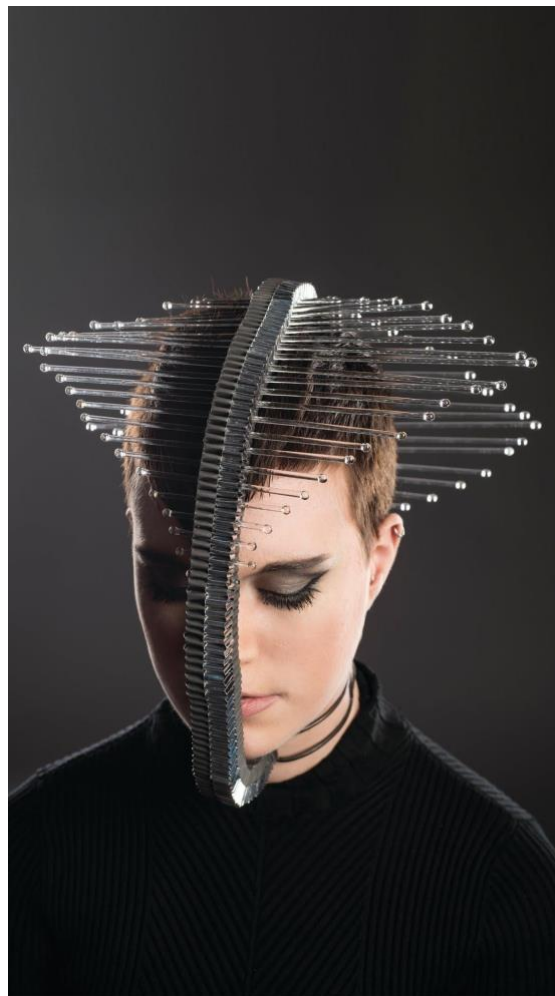
Every person has their own strengths and weaknesses, but it is not so common for everyone to address those contrasts within. Through my sculpture, I want the viewer to see this dual factor as well as how it is balanced as my work is not just about the symbolic depiction, but also about the experience it gives to the person wearing it. Keeping that as a base, I created a sculpture that visually divides the face into two main halves. In doing so, I want to emphasize the idea that despite the existence of two main contrasting sides within the same person, there is a need to balance them both as the integrity of the whole is important.



Samyuktha Valluru 10; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, Mylar, glass.

The face being the top most part of our body, any weight on it immediately changes how we handle the weight. I used the same principle in this sculpture, where the wearer is consciously handling the form. Using glass rods as the elements to distribute that weight, I composed their design so that the opposite directions that they are pointing towards become a metaphoric expression of the contrasts within a personality.

Moving to the technical aspects, the choker is fabricated using a 14g square contoured copper wire, which is then coated in liver of Sulphur Patina to achieve a dark grey tone to match the vibe. In order for the structure to open and close, I soldered a hinge mechanism on one side and a magnetic lock on the opposite side.



Samyuktha Valluru 11; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, Mylar, glass.

While the central bridge going around the face is constructed by weaving it, I started using a high polish mirror finish Mylar in combination with matte finished grey paper as I wanted to expand my color palette of flat colors and finishes into metallic shades as well. The flame worked glass rods are interlocked into this structure by passing them through the negative spaces of the weaving, where they stand out makes the wearer balance them with caution. This experience is what I want to show through my photographic evidences as well. Before this piece, I always had the fear of making my design come into reality as I always question myself even before trying to make it. But at this point after finishing this sculpture, I feel like I was able to problem solve my design visions in a more practical way. I could see myself handling the physical dynamics of material, weight and composition with the body.



Samyuktha Valluru 12; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, Mylar, glass.

Karma - Rebirth

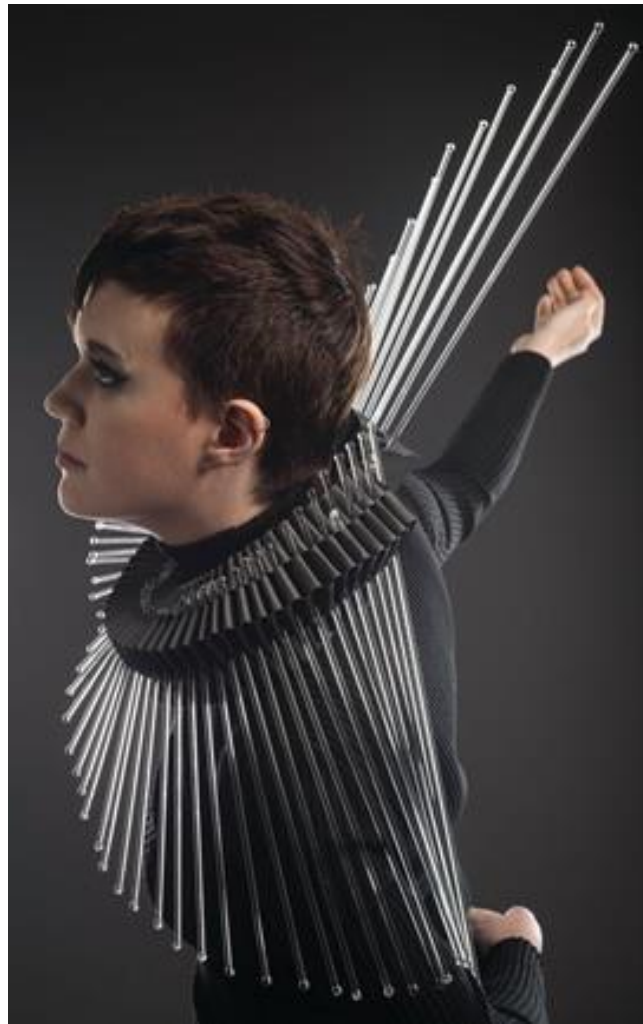
My next piece 'Rebirth' is a neck sculpture that speaks about the relationship of our actions with the universe. This piece is an abstract representation of the Hindu term 'Karma' which means action, work or deed. It also refers to the spiritual principle of cause and effect where intent and actions of an individual (cause) influence the future of that individual (effect). 'Karma' - good or bad - can be affected by the conditions under which the actions are performed. As one sows, so shall they reap. This is a universal principle on which Buddhist morality is based. The truth applies to both physical and moral worlds.

In relation to the physical world of cause and effect, I wanted to bring this idea using our neck and shoulder as the main platforms of expression as our torso is a central part of the body that first draws the viewer's attention. With or without our knowledge, every action always has a massive impact on the bigger aspects. This is exactly what I want my viewer to see through the kinetic sculpture I built.



Samyuktha Valluru 13; Karma, Copper, grey chart paper, glass

After the experience built with materials I want to use for my thesis, I designed a structure that can change with the way we move as I want to create a wearable experience that emphasizes the principle of cause and effect. Since the paper weaving used as the main structure has a flexible nature, I framed it around the neck using a metal lock in the back. This metal lock is a screw in mechanism that matches the design language of the whole. I then interlocked the flame worked glass rods into this paper weaved structure in such a way that each and every other chord is interconnected with the movements that happen in the whole form.



Samyuktha Valluru 14; Karma, Copper, grey chart paper, glass

This physical dynamic of each detail interdependently moving in relation with each other is a great evidence that is depicting the cause and effect phenomenon. Action that starts with the wearer's movements (cause) can actually result in the paper form and every single glass cord attached to it to move (effect). This piece is therefore an experience created to the wearer, where even a slight shift in their own movements can show them how the whole form is affected.



Samyuktha Valluru 15; Karma, Copper, grey chart paper, glass

This sculpture gains its essence only when in relation with the wearer and their actions. Since our eyes are framed to see the rhythmic arrangement of paper and glass in a certain fashion, even a slight motion caused to disturb that pattern makes the 'effect' be seen in an evident way. This relationship that I built between material, body and action is what gives the whole design its life, thus making the viewer also connect with the idea of action and reaction.

Equilibrium

After my understanding of the significant role our body plays in relation to objects, I created my next piece 'Equilibrium' - a shoulder sculpture that takes its inspiration from the way our body is naturally designed. When I say 'naturally designed', I'm talking about the visual and functional aspects of our body. There is always a visual symmetry that it follows, where the left side details match with the right side details. In a similar way, when I exercise, I try to exercise for both the sides of the body as I feel like my body instinctively functions by demanding that equal attention. This equality aspect that our body naturally operates with is what I use in my piece 'Equilibrium'.

While the term "Equilibrium" means 'a state in which opposing forces or influences are balanced', I wanted to show how important this term is for relationships.

Be it a relationship with anyone, it is always essential for one end to give equal importance to the other end. This is what I want to leave my viewers with, along with a strong visual.



Samyuktha Valluru 16; Equilibrium, Brass, steel, grey chart paper glass



Samyuktha Valluru 17; Equilibrium, Brass, steel, grey chart paper glass

I see shoulders as the supporting space for carrying weight on the body. It transfers an image of power and responsibility. Keeping that image in mind, I wanted to design a construction that shows equality in all its senses. I created a form which is not just symmetric in aesthetics, but which also makes the wearer feel an equal responsibility of handling the weight.

The anatomy that I designed for this sculpture is a little more complex and advanced in comparison to my previous pieces, as I had to problem solve a lot of technical aspects that can achieve the model I had in vision. To start with, I designed an elaborate wire frame structure that connects the arms, shoulders and neck together. These connections are made in order to support the weight that I planned to install on the top. Using an 18g square formed brass wire; I created a wire frame that extends by starting from arms all the way to the neck. In this wire construction, I

soldered a hinge that is the length of the whole shoulder because this same part which locks at the arms had to be opened and closed for the wearer to put it through. This long hinge frame that continues to extend till the neck choker is soldered to a steel screw lock on the front, where the detail of the screw in lock is where the whole anatomy takes the support to stabilize. After finishing the metal fixture with as minimal detailing as possible, I glued the four-strip paper weaving structure to both the sides as I wanted to represent the equal distribution of weight and volume through it. I then passed a complex web of glass rods through the paper form to see how well even the individual parts of my design will support each other. To my surprise, though metal, paper and glass are all very different in their own ways, it was only through my design composition that I was able to balance them in the right way. Thus, making this complex design become a unique symbol of equilibrium, where the wearer and their body act as the major supporting grounds to depict it.

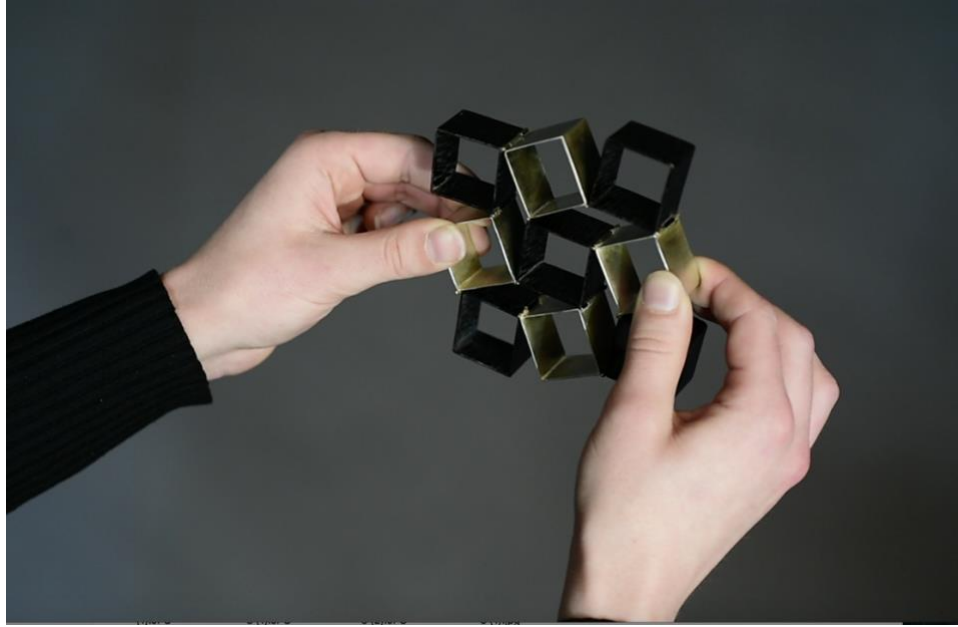


Samyuktha Valluru 18; Equilibrium, Brass, steel, grey chart paper, glass

Transform

‘Transform’ is a small scale kinetic sculpture that speaks about the evolution that happens within a personality, in context to human relationships. Talking about marriage in specific, I wanted to address how two people involved in the marriage go through a change in order to maintain the unity. In my knowledge, there is no single person who is the same; there is only a similarity which can help them come parallel with each other. However, even that smallest difference between them can make it a situation for any kind of couple to accommodate and adapt with each other. Now, one other perspective lies in how much ever change an individual goes through, there is one true inner personality that they would possess. It is this innate personality that anyone will go back to because there is something about that originality within. We grew up being that, learnt and adapted to become a better one, but that ‘individual nature’ that one has is like a signature style of their own. Through my work, I want to represent this phase that everyone goes through when being in a marriage. I want to show how two individuals coming from their own different paths try to align with each other, and then even if they go back to being their original selves, how they function to maintain that unity by adapting to each other.

I designed this idea by creating a kinetic sculpture that the user can interact with. For the depiction of two different characters, I handcrafted two hollow formed squares. Square shape being the primary element of my design language from the start, and to highlight the possibility of two people being similar but not same, I chose to keep their shape same but color different. Using sterling silver in combination with copper (liver of Sulphur patina), I was able to achieve a contrast look that resulted in milky white and dark grey color.



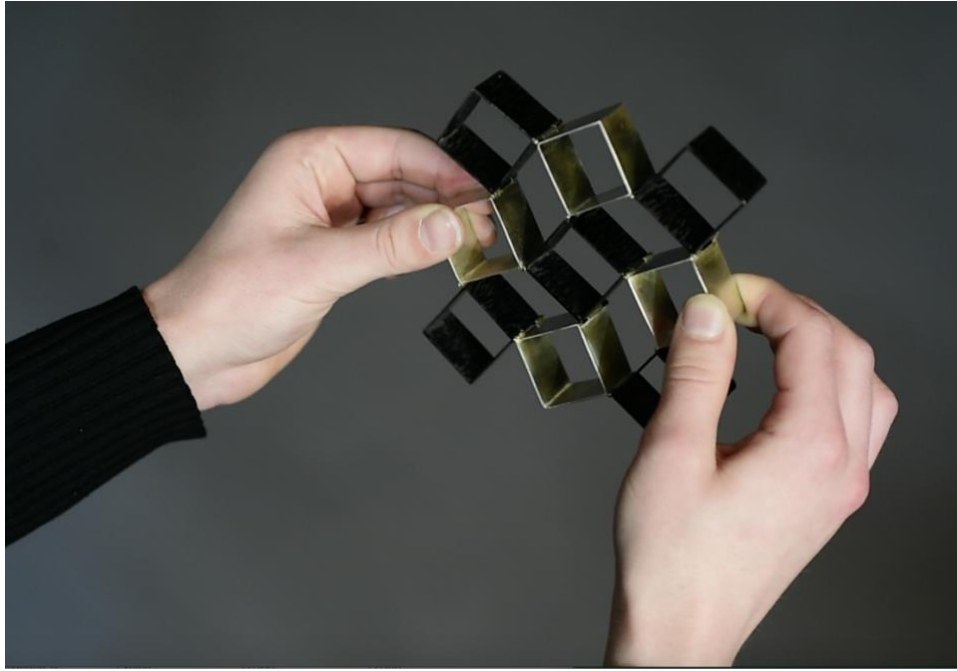
Samyuktha Valluru 19; Transform, sterling silver, copper

Transformation being the journey that it is, I wanted to show it as a process rather than as an end result. In my vision, marriage is a complex web where two different people come from two different worlds, interconnect and adapt so that the union of them stays strong. Keeping this in mind, I designed the form to look like an interlinked maze, where every individual character is connected using a movable hinge as the joinery. This kinetic joint is created at every single point of connection, where the movement caused by every single character interdependently influences the orientation of all the characters. Therefore, this piece becomes a visual evidence of my idea that when a transformation happens, it starts from a point where two different people align with each other (marriage), then as the relation progresses, they try to adapt by growing with each other (transformation), and after they get comfortable, they go back to being their original selves (originality) by also maintaining that unity of the bond in the end.

Since I always thrived on experience, I wanted this piece to be an interactive sculpture where the user creates the transformation that I intend to show.

This process is seen through the video that I uploaded on YouTube

Transform Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBmTk4yH7fc>

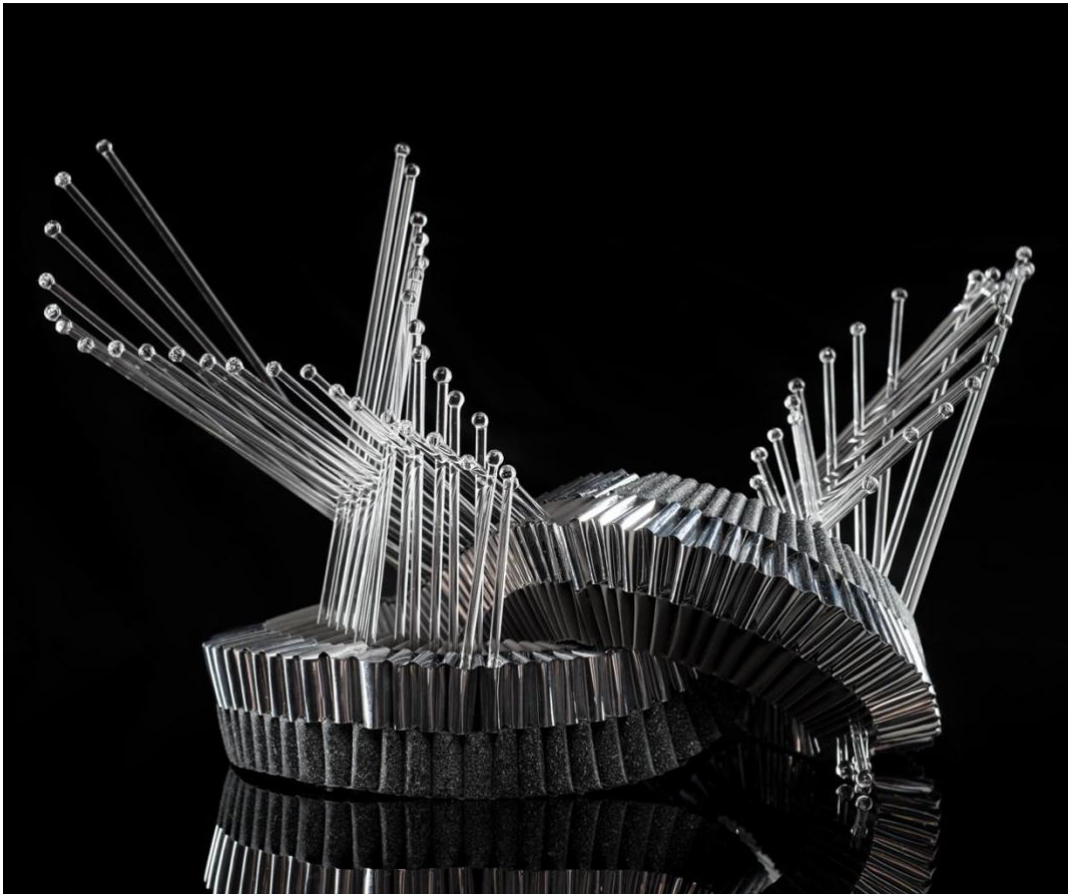


Samyuktha Valluru 20; Transform, Sterling silver, copper

Unlike my other pieces, this piece involved a complexity of other kind due to the scale and the kinetics it needed. The hinge that is soldered at every connecting point had to be oriented in the right direction as it would change the alignment of every individual piece if not planned right. As the whole form is designed to rotate at 180-degree angle, starting from one end and shifting to another end, I had to space every individual character with equal amount of hinge gap so that the design can fold back to where it started. This experience of designing and building this piece increased my understanding of fabrication and detailing kinetics at that small scale.

Eternal

My next piece 'Eternal' is a table top sculpture that takes its inspiration from the relationship we have with the whole world around us. After crafting a collection that depict various phases of relationships, I wanted to make this last piece as a tribute to all of them together. In this circle of life, there is always an endless network of people and relations we keep building. From our birth till we pass, we crisscross paths with people we know, met and grew up with. But we do not really look back on how beautiful a path we lay as we build our network of relations. This sculpture 'Eternal' is a visual accolade to the journey of life that is an endless network of people that we share our paths with.



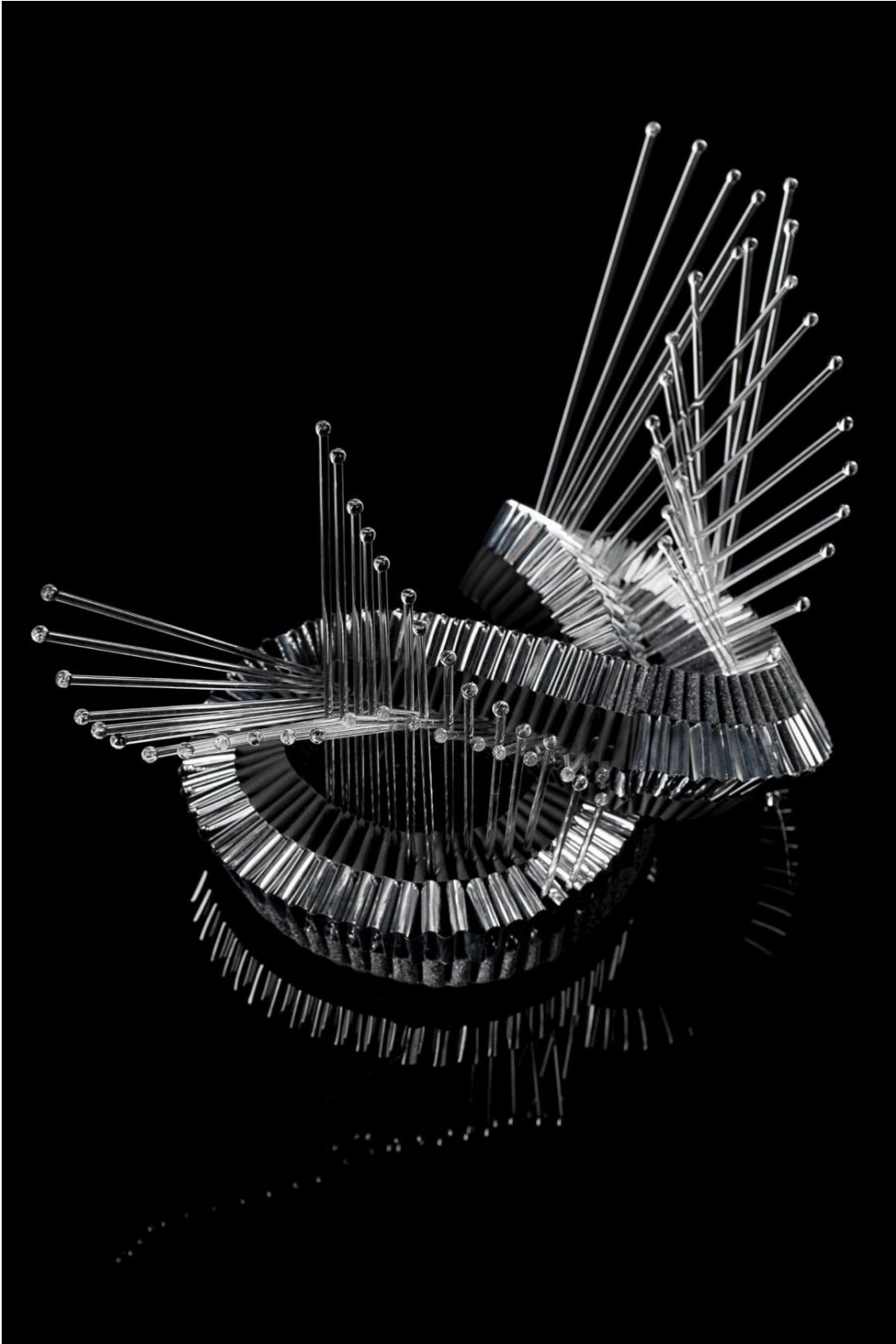
Samyuktha Valluru 21; Eternal, Grey chart paper, Mylar, glass

My inspiration to depict this endless journey comes from the infinity symbol. This shape has a lot of significance in various cultures. However as suggested by history, its meaning in context to the yogi connection (Sehra,2017) says that *“there is no beginning or end. It represents the universe as an ongoing and continuous entity. The visual of two separate circles coming together means that we are all united in this cycle of life.”*

Following this theory, I crafted the paper weaving technique using matte grey chart paper and high polish mirrored Mylar to show the high contrast of variables coming together. This paper form starts at one point and closes back at the same point but by forming the shape of eight, where the resulting infinity shape is seen from the top view. As this woven structure forms a base for the whole form to stand, I relate its infinity shape to the intercrossing paths of every individual. While the glass rods locked into every consecutive detail are a metaphoric sign of the people that we meet in life, their ascending and descending arrangement represent every growing phase starting from childhood to old age.

Though the construction of the piece involves only two main techniques, paper weaving and glass flame working, the way every chord aligns and composes with each other in the structure makes it a complex puzzle to figure out their stability. The fact that they are arranged from ascending to descending orders creates a weight shift in the structure. Thus, making it a complex design to plan and compose each element involved in it.

After finishing this piece, I found myself become open in not just thinking through the design process, but also in implementing that vision with right understanding of materials that would help the design come alive.



Samyuktha Valluru 22; Eternal, Grey chart paper, Mylar, glass

CONCLUSION

The biggest challenge that I came across is the execution of every new design that had to be in coordination with body, its proportion and action. Human body, its actions and postures being the biggest supporting aspects for my models, I could see my works advancing from small scale to big sculptures where each body part was explored to symbolize my ideas of relationships. Though I followed one similar paper weaving technique throughout my designs, I faced other bigger challenges in terms of scale, structural supports and other physical dynamics that can make the design work. I learnt from my mistakes, and overcame whatever was next. Each piece pushed me forward to make much elaborate designs that I once used to be afraid of even starting.

During my journey to becoming a craftsperson, I can finally see myself balance that thought process of going wild but still being able to handle the practical issues that would arise. Though I never had a background of crafting with materials, through my thesis, I could understand the way each different material works. In my voyage to represent coexistence in relationships, I myself started to build a deep connection with every piece as a maker. All of these works and experiences throughout my thesis not only allowed me to define my voice as an artist, designer and a maker, but also aided me to decide what I want to do in future.

As a fine art student specializing in jewelry, I did not limit myself to the traditional norms of jewelry making and precious materials. I pushed every possible convention by discovering new ways of wearability and self-expression that stayed true to my concept. It is with this journey and knowledge that I want to go back to India to start spreading awareness on new jewelry and the potential it can hold in today's context.

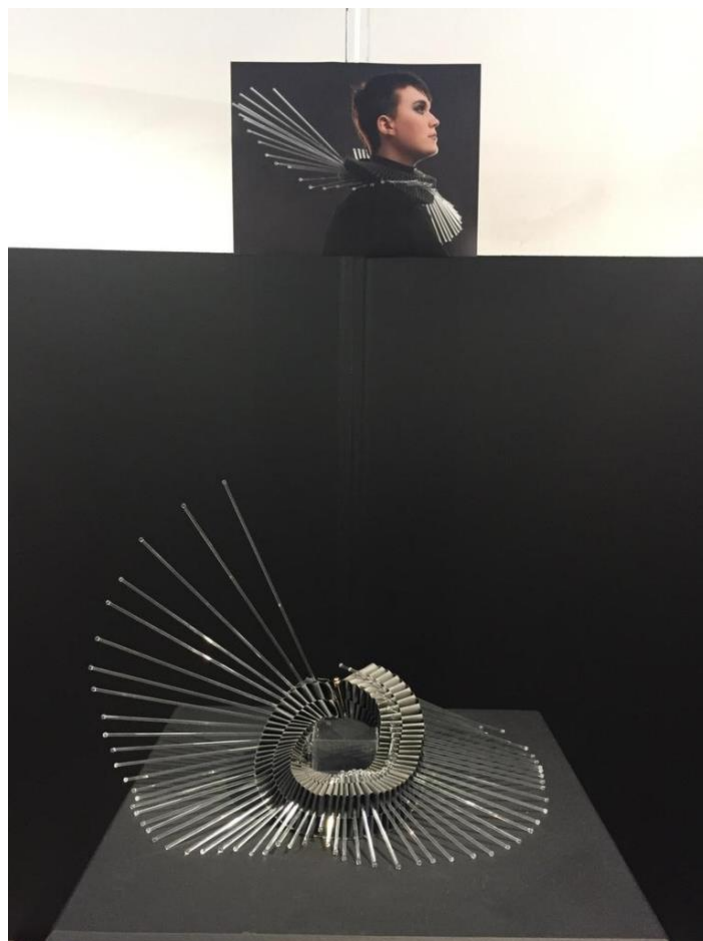
INSTALLATION



Installation image 1; 2017



Installation image 2; 2017



Installation image 3; 2017



Installation image 4; 2017



Installation image 5; 2017



Installation image 6; 2017



Installation image 7; 2017



Installation image 8; 2017

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Figure.1, Gijs Bakker, Shadow jewelry, 1976.

Figure.2, Gerd Rothmann, Bracelet Zeigefinger, 1992.

Figure.3, Iris Van Herpen, Between the lines, 2017.

Personal Images

Samyuktha Valluru 1; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper

Samyuktha Valluru 2; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper

Samyuktha Valluru 3; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper

Samyuktha Valluru 4; Anubhavana (Part 1), Brass, sketchbook paper

Samyuktha Valluru 5; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

Samyuktha Valluru 6; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

Samyuktha Valluru 7; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

Samyuktha Valluru 8; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

Samyuktha Valluru 9; Anubhavana (Part 2), Brass, grey chart paper, plastic

Samyuktha Valluru 10; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, Mylar, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 11; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, mylar, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 12; Duality, Copper, grey chart paper, mylar, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 13; Karma, Copper, grey chart paper, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 14; Karma, Copper, grey chart paper, glass

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Samyuktha Valluru 16; Equilibrium, brass, steel, grey chart paper, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 17; Equilibrium, brass, steel, grey chart paper, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 18; Equilibrium, brass, steel, grey chart paper, glass

Samyuktha Valluru 19; Transform, sterling silver, copper

Samyuktha Valluru 20; Transform, sterling silver, copper

Samyuktha Valluru 21; Eternal, Mylar, glass, sketchbook paper

Samyuktha Valluru 22; Eternal, Mylar, glass, sketchbook paper

Installation Images

Installation Image 1; 2017

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